

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A socket system for coupling a pin of an IC (integrated circuit) device to a contact pad of a circuit board, comprising:

a zif (zero-insertion-force) opening on a socket that asserts substantially zero force as the pin of the IC device is inserted therein;

a compression mount lead on the socket that ~~presses is compressed~~ against the contact pad of the circuit board; and

a mechanism for coupling the pin to the compression mount lead ~~using with~~ only a lateral direction of force ~~applied~~ on the pin ~~during a process of coupling the pin to the compression mount lead,~~

wherein the lateral direction of the force applied on the pin is always perpendicular to a length of the pin such that the force applied on the pin is never directed toward the IC device.

Claim 2 (Canceled).

Claim 3 (Currently amended): The socket system of claim 2, wherein the mechanism for coupling the pin to the compression mount lead comprises:

forking leads coupled to the compression mount lead and surrounding the pin within the zif opening; and

an actuation plate and an actuation lever that press the forking leads against the pin with ~~force directed the actuation plate being pressed toward the forking leads in only one lateral direction that is perpendicular to the length of the pin against the forking leads during the process of coupling~~ such that the pin is coupled to the compression mount lead via the forking leads.

Claim 4 (Previously presented): The socket system of claim 3, wherein top portions of

the forking leads contact a top portion of the pin toward the IC device to minimize an electrical path length between the IC device and the circuit board.

Claim 5 (Previously presented): The socket system of claim 1, wherein the compression mount lead is comprised of a pogo spring.

Claim 6 (Currently amended): The socket system of claim 1, wherein the compression mount lead is comprised of a J-bend lead ~~having a bottom surface that presses~~ is compressed against the contact pad of the circuit board.

Claim 7 (Previously presented): The socket system of claim 1, wherein the socket is mounted onto the circuit board such that the compression mount lead presses against the contact pad.

Claim 8 (Previously presented): The socket system of claim 1, wherein substantially zero force is asserted on the body of the IC device when the pin is coupled to the contact pad.

Claim 9 (Previously presented): The socket system of claim 1, further comprising: a back plate mounted to a back-side of the circuit board when the socket is mounted to a front-side of the circuit board.

Claim 10 (Previously presented): The socket system of claim 1, wherein the socket and the circuit board are part of a test system for testing the IC device.

Claim 11 (Previously presented): The socket system of claim 1, wherein the socket and the circuit board are parts for an OEM (original equipment manufacturer) machine.

Claim 12 (Currently amended): A socket system for coupling a pin of an IC (integrated circuit) device to a contact pad of a circuit board, comprising:
means for asserting substantially zero force on the pin of the IC device as the pin is

inserted into a zif (zero-insertion-force) opening on a socket; and

means for coupling the pin of the IC device within the zif opening to the contact pad of the circuit board using only a lateral direction of force applied on the pin ~~during a process of coupling the pin to the contact pad,~~

wherein the lateral direction of the force applied on the pin is always perpendicular to a length of the pin such that the force applied on the pin is never directed toward the IC device.

Claim 13 (Previously presented): The socket system of claim 12, further comprising: means for minimizing an electrical path length between the IC device and the circuit board.

Claim 14 (Previously presented): The socket system of claim 12, further comprising: means for asserting substantially zero force on the body of the IC device when the pin is coupled to the contact pad.

Claim 15 (Currently amended): A method for coupling a pin of an IC (integrated circuit) device to a contact pad of a circuit board, including the steps of:

asserting substantially zero force on the pin as the pin of the IC device is inserted into a zif (zero-insertion-force) opening on a socket;

pressing compressing a compression mount lead on the socket against the contact pad of the circuit board; and

coupling the pin to the compression mount lead using only a lateral direction of force applied on the pin during a process of coupling the pin to the compression mount lead,

wherein the lateral direction of the force applied on the pin is always perpendicular to a length of the pin such that the force applied on the pin is never directed toward the IC device.

Claim 16 (Canceled).

Claim 17 (Currently amended): The method of claim 16, further including the step of: pressing forking leads against the pin with ~~force-directed~~ an actuation plate that is pressed

toward the forking leads in only one lateral direction that is perpendicular to the length of the pin
against the forking leads during the process of coupling within the zif opening such that the pin
is coupled to the compression mount lead via the forking leads.

Claim 18 (Previously presented): The method of claim 17, wherein top portions of the forking leads contact a top portion of the pin toward the IC device to minimize an electrical path length between the IC device and the circuit board.

Claim 19 (Previously presented): The method of claim 15, wherein the compression mount lead is comprised of a pogo spring.

Claim 20 (Currently amended): The method of claim 15, wherein the compression mount lead is comprised of a J-bend lead ~~having a bottom surface that presses is compressed~~ against the contact pad of the circuit board.

Claim 21 (Previously presented): The method of claim 15, further including the step of: mounting the socket onto the circuit board such that the compression mount lead presses against the contact pad.

Claim 22 (Previously presented): The method of claim 15, further including the step of: asserting substantially zero force on the body of the IC device when the pin is coupled to the contact pad.

Claim 23 (Previously presented): The method of claim 15, further including the step of: mounting a back plate to a back-side of the circuit board when the socket is mounted to a front-side of the circuit board.

Claim 24 (Previously presented): The method of claim 15, wherein the socket and the circuit board are part of a test system for testing the IC device.

Claim 25 (Previously presented): The method of claim 15, wherein the socket and the circuit board are parts for an OEM (original equipment manufacturer) machine.